

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 /040 W

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R 231350Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8714

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, TD, XM

SUBJECT: TRINIDADIAN NOMINATED FOR SELA POST

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED JANUARY 18 THAT KNOWLSON GIFT, TRINIDADIAN DIPLOMAT WHO RECENTLY SERVED AS ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, IS BEING PUSHED BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN STATES FOR POSITION OF DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF SELA. THIS WAS DESCRIBED AS ONE OF THE "TWO MAJOR ISSUES" DISCUSSED AS THE SELA MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING IN CARACAS LAST WEEK. REPORT STATED THAT CUBA AND COSTA RICA ALSO NOMINATED CANDIDATES FOR THIS POSITION, AND THAT FINAL SELECTION WILL BE MADE AT NEXT SELA MEETING IN CARACAS IN APRIL. END UNCLASSIFIED.
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2. MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICIAL CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY THAT COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES STRONGLY DESIRE TO HOLD A KEY POSITION IN SELA SECRETARIAT. HE SAID THESE COUNTRIES AGREED AT THE OCTOBER 1975 HAVANA MEETING
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OF THE ECLA CARIBBEAN COMMITTEE TO UNITE BEHIND ONE

CANDIDATE AND TO INSIST UPON RECOGNITION OF, AND A MEANINGFUL ROLE FOR, THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN MEMBERS IN SELA.

3. ONE MEMBER OF THE TRINIDAD DELEGATION TO THE CARACAS MEETING TOLD EMBOFF THAT CARIBBEAN STATES SEE THE SELECTION OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL AS A TEST OF LATIN WILLINGNESS TO HAVE SELA FUNCTION AS A TRUE REGIONAL BODY RATHER THAN A LATINS-ONLY CLUB. HE CONCEDED, HOWEVER, THAT THUS FAR THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES HAD CONTRIBUTED VERY LITTLE TO THE DELIBERATIONS AT THE SELA MEETINGS. HE ALSO CRITICIZED SELA'S ORGANIZERS FOR TENDING TO PROJECT A LATINS-ONLY IMAGE AT THE MEETINGS, NOTING FOR EXAMPLE THAT DOCUMENTATION FOR THE MEETINGS IS INITIALLY ONLY AVAILABLE IN SPANISH, AND REMARKING THAT ENGLISH VERSIONS WERE STILL NOT READY WHEN THE TRINIDAD DELEGATION DEPARTED CARACAS. RICH

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